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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/883,088	06/15/2001	Robert J. Del Principe	9437.17504	8647

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EXAMINER

WONG, STEVEN B

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3711

DATE MAILED: 12/31/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/883,088

Applicant(s)

DEL PRINCIPE, ROBERT J.

Examiner

Steven Wong

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 October 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 19-24 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 and 25-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 9.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election of species 1 (Figures 1, 2, 2a, 3 and 6) in Paper No. 8 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)). Claims 18-24 are withdrawn from further consideration as being directed to a non-elected embodiment.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

Claims 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. The language describing the minimum and maximum bend angles is unclear. Pages 12 and 13 describe minimum and maximum bend angles for the shaft, however it is unclear what the minimum angle is defining. The specification states that if the shaft exceeds the maximum bend angle then the shaft will permanently break, however it does not state what happens when the minimum bend angle is reached or exceeded.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

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(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-3 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Pond, III (3,087,728). Regarding claims 1 and 18, Pond discloses a simulated golf club comprising a shaft having an annular score line (noted at 28 in Figure 2). Pond states that the shaft (14, 16) is formed from a flexible rubber or a plastic material. These materials are inherently capable of deflecting in response to a bending force and returning to the original condition once the bending force is removed. Further, the shaft will permanently break along the score line (note Figure 3) when the shaft is deflected to a bend angle that exceeds predetermined parameters.

Regarding claims 2 and 3, note Figure 5 which shows a round cross section.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 4-17 and 25-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pond, III (3,087,728). Regarding claims 4-8, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to form the shaft of Pond in elliptical, rectangular, octagonal or hexagonal cross sections in order to simulate other types of golf club shafts.

Regarding claims 9-11, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide pins (38) of various strengths in order to alter the amount of force required to break the golf club.

Regarding claims 12-17, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to form the shaft from the recited materials in order to take advantage of that material's well known physical characteristics.

Regarding claim 25, the recited steps are rendered obvious by the method disclosed by Pond. By providing pins of various strengths one of ordinary skill in the art would obviously bend the shaft to a range of bend angles not to exceed a predetermined maximum bend angle in order to test the strength of the pin.

Regarding claims 26 and 27, the recited steps are rendered obvious by the method disclosed by Pond. Pond discloses for the shaft to be bent beyond a predetermined bend angle in order to break the shaft at the score line. Further, Pond teaches disposing of the broken shaft and replacing it with an additional one.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Steven Wong whose telephone number is 703-308-3135. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 7am-3:30pm.

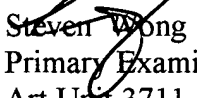
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Sewell can be reached on 703-308-2126. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-308-3579 for regular communications and 703-308-7768 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1148.


Steven Wong
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3711

SBW
December 20, 2002